



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Gwich'in Tribal Council Reference Number GTC-2022-001

Indigenous Early Learning Child Care Initiative

Gwich'in Tribal Council Education, Language and Early Learning
Departments

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Overview

This proposal is an invitation to work with the Gwich'in Tribal Council Language, Early Learning, and Education departments on an Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Transformation Initiative.

The Gwich'in have traditionally used and occupied lands in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon from time immemorial. In July 1921, Chiefs and headmen representing the Loucheux (as the Gwich'in were then called) of Arctic Red River (now Tsiigehtchic) and Fort McPherson (also known as Teetl'it Zheh) signed Treaty 11 with the Crown, creating a special nation-to-nation relationship with Canada.

Established in 1992, the Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) is an Indigenous organization that represents approximately 3,400 Gwich'in Participants in the Mackenzie-Delta of the Northwest Territories and across Canada. The objectives of the GTC are to:

1. Protect and preserve the rights, interest and benefits of the Gwich'in under the *Constitution Act*, Treaty 11, and the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement (GCLCA);
2. Overseeing the use, ownership and management of lands, waters and resources in the Gwich'in Settlement Region;
3. Retain, preserve, and enhance the traditional and cultural values, customs, and language of the Gwich'in in a changing society;
4. Develop and promote economic, social, educational, and cultural programs that will enable the Gwich'in to become self-sufficient and full participating members in a global society; and
5. Receive, preserve, and enhance the capital and the lands and other benefits transferred to the Gwich'in pursuant to the GCLCA signed on April 22, 1992, in Teetl'it Zheh

The Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) is an Indigenous government representing four Gwich'in communities: Aklavik, Fort McPherson, Tsiigehtchic and Inuvik which make up the Regional Gwich'in Collaborative (RGC) consisting of the Ehdiitat Gwich'in Council (Aklavik), Gwichya Gwich'in Council (Tsiigehtchic), Teetl'it Gwich'in Council (Fort McPherson), Nihtat Gwich'in Council (Inuvik), and the Gwich'in Tribal Council.

The Gwich'in Settlement Area (GSA) encompasses approximately 22,330 square kilometres of land in the Northwest Territories and 1,554 square kilometres in the Yukon. This includes subsurface (mineral) rights to 6,158 square kilometres of land in the Northwest Territories. The people traditionally speak the Gwich'in languages in two dialects: Teetl'it and Gwichya.

The Gwich'in Tribal Council continues to work to improve the quality of life for its Gwich'in Nation. Through existing partnerships and agreements, Gwich'in Tribal Council continues to advocate on behalf of the communities it represents while working towards self-government.

Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care (IELCC) Transformation Initiative

Early child development sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behavior, and health. The experiences children have in early childhood shape the brain and the child's capacity to learn, to get along with others, and to respond to daily stresses and challenges. It is critical that children and families are provided opportunities to be engaged and supported in quality programs from prenatal to school age. Initiatives that are rooted in their Indigenous cultures, languages, and knowledges is the foundation from which children form their individual and collective identity and sense of wellbeing.

ELCC programs need culturally competent, well-educated, trained, and well-compensated early childhood educators in healthy, equitable, and supportive work environments.

The IELCC Framework provides a guide for communities, program administrators, service providers, policy makers, and governments to work towards achieving a shared vision that all Indigenous children have opportunities to experience high-quality, culturally strong ELCC programs.

Alongside distinctions-based priorities and relationships, this Framework sets out principles and goals for Indigenous ELCC to better respond to and support needs, responsibilities, and aspirations of all Indigenous children and families across Canada, regardless of where they live. The First Nations Distinction-Based Framework principles are as follows:

- First Nations systems of programs and services, anchored in First Nations culture, language, and knowledge;
- Controlled and directed by First Nations at all levels of system governance, with reciprocal accountability;
- Well-funded, diverse high-quality programs and services;
- Services that are available, affordable, flexible, and responsive to unique needs and realities of First Nations communities;
- Transparent and accountable services and programs;
- Collaborations and partnerships that support coordinated, integrated First Nations-led systems of ELCC; and
- First Nations capacity is supported at all levels.

Request for Proposals

The Gwich'in Tribal Council is seeking proposals from organizations and/or individuals who have a strong background and demonstrated knowledge and experience working effectively with Gwich'in communities, extensive knowledge and experience in Indigenous early childhood education, and the ability to build capacity for change and lead projects.

The proposal must include a detailed plan for engagement with Gwich'in leadership, communities, and other key stakeholders within the Region in developing an ELCC framework specific to the GSA that will be controlled and directed by Gwich'in, including authority and decision-making at all levels of policy

development and governance. The plan should include goals, objectives, activities, timelines, and resources needed to complete the work starting July 2022 to November 2022.

The focus should be on Gwich'in identified priorities and strategic actions over the short, medium, and long term for realizing change in ELCC structures, systems, and programs and in the creation of a regional structure to support and coordinate Gwich'in governance around early learning and childcare.

The work should also create a Gwich'in human resource strategy around early learning and childcare that promotes and builds on existing capacities and assets of GSA communities.

You should work closely with the Gwich'in Tribal Council's Early Learning and Education departments and affiliated GSA community governments.

Deliverables

Development of an early learning and childcare framework anchored in Gwich'in knowledge, language, and culture to determine

- Literature review of similar or like projects/programs as it relates to the GSA;
- A plan to engage families, Elders, communities, educators, and stakeholders;
- Creation of a regional governance structure comprised of Gwich'in communities to inform, and implement program/policy development and decision-making in ELCC;
- Identification, creation, and enhancement of early learning and childcare programs and services that are high quality with sufficient and sustainable funding;
- A plan to implement early learning and childcare programs and services that are inclusive, accessible, affordable, flexible, and responsive to the unique and diverse needs of Gwich'in children and their families;
- A method to measure and evaluate processes to ensure transparency and accountability of programs and services to families, communities, funders, and external stakeholders;
- Creation of a Gwich'in early learning and childcare human resource strategy that promotes and builds on the existing community capacity, engagement, and staff development; and
- Create a plan that promotes respectful linkages and partnerships at multiple levels and in varied contexts that support a coordinated system of ELCC programs and services for Gwich'in children and families.

Project Outcomes

This initiative should achieve the following project outcomes:

- Children and families are supported by a comprehensive and coordinated system of ELCC policies, programs, and services led by the GSA communities, rooted in Gwich'in knowledge, language, and culture, and supported by strong partnerships;

- ELCC is holistic, accessible, flexible, and is inclusive of the needs and aspirations of Gwich'in children and families;
- Gwich'in communities have strengthened capacity and increased level of skills to provide high-quality early childhood programming and initiatives; and
- Current and future changes that align with early years learning practices or opportunities as it relates to the changing landscape of the education system or curriculum.

Selection Process

Proposals due by 4:00 pm on June 20, 2022. If your proposal is selected, you will be contacted by June 22, 2022. This will be a contract-based proposal for 4 months.

Proposals will be chosen based on the following criterion:

- Overall scope and experience in education, social services, and/or early learning and childcare (or related field);
- Proven ability and experience in working collaboratively with Gwich'in or Indigenous communities supporting community-led, asset-based approaches;
- Proven ability to generate user-friendly reports and materials that accurately capture the priorities and vision of Gwich'in communities;
- Confirmation of ability to deliver the services described in the RFP including personnel, IT equipment, and resources;
- The budget for this project is \$150,000 (the successful proponent will be based on the best proposal and not necessarily the lowest price). Costs may include:
 - Consultant Fees (Develop Framework, Report, Recommendations for Implementation, Funding Distributions based on a Community Allocation Model)
 - Consultant Resources (Office Space, Equipment, Telephone, Internet, Printing)
 - Consultant Travel Pre-Engagement
 - Community Engagement - Consultant Travel
 - Community Engagement Compilation
 - Implementation Plan

Submission Requirements

In your proposal, please include the following:

- Qualifications in developing strategic plans/frameworks in collaboration with First Nations;
- The methodology used to meet the deliverables;

- A detailed budget and projected timelines to complete specific tasks;
- Examples of related work; and
- Three references.

Deadline for Questions is June 15, 2022, 2:00 pm Mountain Standard Time and the contact person is Donna Neyando, GTC Early Learning Coordinator (email: Donna.Neyando@gwichintribal.ca). Please note that any questions or enquiries made after this deadline may not receive a response.

Proposals are to be sent electronically by closing time: June 20, 2022, 5:00 pm MST to Donna Neyando, Gwich'in Tribal Council Early Learning Coordinator via email: Donna.Neyando@gwichintribal.ca.

Late proposals will not be considered.

Thank you for your interest. All applications will be reviewed; however, only successful applicants will be contacted.